
NOTICES (continued)

A *claimant*, on appeal, may request an expedited appeal of an adverse *urgent-care claim* decision orally or in writing. In such case, all necessary information, including the plan's benefit determination on review, will be transmitted between the plan and the *claimant* by telephone, facsimile, or other available similarly expeditious method, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

Determination of appeals of denied claims will be conducted promptly, will not defer to the initial determination and will not be made by the person who made the initial adverse claim determination or a subordinate of that person. The determination will take into account all comments, documents, records, and other information submitted by the *claimant* relating to the claim.

On appeal, a *claimant* may review relevant documents and may submit issues and comments in writing. A *claimant* on appeal may, upon request, discover the identity of medical or vocational experts whose advice was obtained on behalf of the plan in connection with the *adverse determination* being appealed, as permitted under applicable law.

If the claims denial is based in whole, or in part, upon a medical judgment, including determinations as to whether a particular treatment, drug, or other service is experimental, investigational, or not medically necessary or appropriate, the person deciding the appeal will consult with a health care professional who has appropriate training and experience in the field of medicine involved in the medical judgment. The consulting health care professional will not be the same person who decided the initial appeal or a subordinate of that person.

Time periods for decisions on appeal

Appeals of claims denials will be decided and notice of the decision provided as follows:

- *Urgent-care claims* - As soon as possible but no later than 72 hours after Humana receives the appeal request;
- *Pre-service claims* - Within a reasonable period but no later than 30 days after Humana receives the appeal request;
- *Post-service claims* - Within a reasonable period but no later than 60 days after Humana receives the appeal request;
- *Concurrent-care decisions* - Within the time periods specified above depending on the type of claim involved.

Appeals denial notices

Notice of a claim denial (including a partial denial) will be provided to *claimants* by mail, postage prepaid, by FAX or by e-mail, as appropriate, within the time periods noted above.

A notice that a claim appeal has been denied will include:

- The specific reason or reasons for the *adverse determination*;

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- Reference to the specific plan provision upon which the determination is based;
- If any internal plan rule, protocol or similar criterion was relied upon to deny the claim. A copy of the rule, protocol or similar criterion will be provided to the *claimant*, free of charge, upon request;
- A statement describing any voluntary appeal procedures offered by the plan and the *claimant's* right to obtain the information about such procedures, and a statement about the *claimant's* right to bring an action under §502(a) of ERISA;
- If an *adverse determination* is based on medical necessity, experimental treatment or similar exclusion or limitation, the notice will state that an explanation of the scientific or clinical basis for the determination will be provided, free of charge, upon request. The explanation will apply the terms of the plan to the covered person's medical circumstances.

In the event an appealed claim is denied, the *claimant* will be entitled to receive without charge reasonable access to, and copies of, any documents, records or other information that:

- Was relied upon in making the determination;
- Was submitted, considered or generated in the course of making the benefit determination, without regard to whether such document, record or other information was relied upon in making the benefit determination;
- Demonstrates compliance with the administrative processes and safeguards required in making the determination;
- Constitutes a statement of policy or guidance with respect to the plan concerning the denied treatment option or benefit for the *claimant's* diagnosis, without regard to whether the statement was relied on in making the benefit determination.

Exhaustion of remedies

Upon completion of the appeals process under this section, a *claimant* will have exhausted his or her administrative remedies under the plan. If Humana fails to complete a claim determination or appeal within the time limits set forth above, the claim shall be deemed to have been denied and the *claimant* may proceed to the next level in the review process.

After exhaustion of remedies, a *claimant* may pursue any other legal remedies available, which may include bringing civil action under ERISA section 502(a) for judicial review of the plan's determination. Additional information may be available from the local U.S. Department of Labor Office.

Legal actions and limitations

No lawsuit may be brought with respect to plan benefits until all remedies under the plan have been exhausted.

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No lawsuit with respect to plan benefits may be brought after the expiration of the applicable limitations period stated in the benefit plan document. If no limitation is stated in the benefit plan document, then no such suit may be brought after the expiration of the applicable limitations under applicable law.

Federal legislation

Women's health and cancer rights of 1998

Required coverage for reconstructive surgery following mastectomies

Under federal law, group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group health insurance providing medical and surgical benefits with respect to mastectomy shall provide, in a case of a participant or beneficiary who is receiving benefits in connection with a mastectomy and who elects breast reconstruction in connection with such mastectomy, coverage for:

- Reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy has been performed;
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce symmetrical appearance; and
- Prostheses and physical complications of all stages of mastectomy, including lymphedemas,

in a manner determined in consultation with the attending physician and the patient. Such coverage may be subject to annual deductibles and coinsurance provisions as may be deemed appropriate and as are consistent with those established for other benefits under the plan.

Statement of rights under the newborn' and mothers' health protection act (NMHPA)

If your plan covers normal pregnancy benefits, the following notice applies to you.

Under federal law, group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group health insurance coverage generally may not restrict benefits for any hospital length of stay in connection with childbirth for the mother or newborn child to less than 48 hours following a vaginal delivery or less than 96 hours following a delivery by cesarean section. However, the plan or issuer may pay for a shorter stay if the attending provider (e.g., physician, nurse midwife, or physician assistant), after consultation with the mother, discharges the mother or newborn earlier.

Also, under federal law, group health plans and health insurance issuers may not set the level of benefits or out-of-pocket costs so any later portion of the 48-hour (or 96-hour) stay is treated in a manner less favorable to the mother or newborn than any earlier portion of the stay.

In addition, a group health plan or health insurance issuer may not, under federal law, require a physician or other health care provider obtain authorization for prescribing a length of stay of up to 48 hours (or 96 hours). However, to use certain providers or facilities, or to reduce your out-of-pocket costs, you may be required to obtain pre-authorization. For information on pre-authorization, contact your plan administrator.